Heroes
Change
Communities

3rd Grade Social Studies

2-3 Week Unit

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Heroes Unit

Part 1: Exploring Heroes (1-2 Weeks)
Students will study local, state, and national heroes to begin looking for common characteristics. Students will create a working definition of “hero” and change it as they learn more about different heroes. Students will select a hero, gather information, and create a poster and timeline spot for their hero. Students will share traits of their hero and heroic deeds.

Part 2: My Heroes and Me (1-2 Weeks)
Students will begin by selecting a personal hero in their own life - someone they know such as a family member, teacher, or friend. They will write about this person and share the heroic traits. Next, students will think about first responders as heroes and write a letter to a first responder in their local community. The unit ends with students thinking about themselves as a hero. What can they do to be a hero for someone else?
About the Unit

CONTENT

This unit focuses on important individuals from American history who have shown the traits of a hero and aligns with the TEKS (Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills). The individuals selected are those listed in the Texas State Standards and provide a varied and unique assortment of heroes that many students will not have studied previously.

INSTRUCTIONAL TIME

This unit is very flexible to fit different schedules and timelines. I teach Social Studies for 40 minutes a day, 4 days a week. I spend about 2 weeks completing the unit. The lessons could easily be shortened, combined, or extended to fit various needs.

FOCUS STANDARDS (TEKS)

3.3B Create and interpret timelines.

3.11B Identify historical figures such as Helen Keller and Clara Barton, and contemporary figures such as Ruby Bridges and military and first responders who exemplify good citizenship.

3.14A Identify and compare the heroic deeds of state and national heroes, including: Hector P. Garcia and James A. Lovell, and other individuals such as Harriett Tubman, Juliette Gordon Low, Todd Beamer, Ellen Ochoa, John “Danny” Olivas, and other contemporary heroes.

3.14B Identify and analyze the heroic deeds of individuals including military and first responders such as the Four Chaplains.

3.17C Interpret oral, visual, and print material by identify the main idea, distinguishing between fact and opinion, identify cause and effect, and comparing and contrasting.
Part I: Exploring Heroes

Lesson 1: What is a Hero?

Begin with the Circle Map. You can create one together as a class or have students create their own on the page provided. Ask students to think about everything they know that has to do with heroes and list words, phrases, and examples that come to mind. The kids may be focused on super heroes in the beginning and that’s okay. After brainstorming, have students use the “What is a Hero?” paper to take their first stab at writing a definition of a hero (on their own). They will revise their definition a few times during the unit. Introduce the heroic traits vocabulary using the reference page and have students make connections to each trait.

Lesson 2: Heroes Come In All Sizes: Ruby Bridges (1-2 days)

I love starting with Ruby Bridges because so many students have big, strong men in mind when we discuss heroes. The students are always fascinated by Ruby because she is a child and because she was so brave. You can begin with a read aloud about Ruby with either of these amazing books:

The Story of Ruby Bridges by Robert Coles (shorter and easier for kids to connect with)

Through My Eyes by Ruby Bridges and Margo Lundell (told by Ruby Bridges herself!)

You can also view this painting by Normal Rockwell online. It is wonderful for discussion and to give students a visual of such a “tiny” hero.

http://www.nrm.org/2011/05/norman-rockwells-the-problem-we-all-live-with-to-be-exhibited-at-the-white-house/

After reading about Ruby, complete the graphic organizer together as a class (facts, heroic deeds, beliefs.) There is an example you can follow. Create a Timeline Page for Ruby Bridges as a model for students. After this lesson, have students go back to their “What is a Hero?” page and write a second definition. You might discuss what changes they made in their definition.

Lesson 3: Hero Study (2-3 days)

Allow students to work with a partner or small group to do a mini-research project on one of the heroes. You can allow groups to choose or just assign their “hero.” They will work with their group to first learn about the hero, gather information, and create a poster about the hero that can be used in a classroom timeline.

*I have included resource ideas such as books and websites for some historical figures because they are readily available. For other figures that are less known, I’ve included fact sheets that can be used with students.

On the Resource Page charts, there are live links to the websites, meaning that you can bring up this document, click the link, and it will take you directly to the page. You could also make this document available to students and allow them to do online research of their hero. Another option would be to go to each site and print out the information for students.

Provide the “Hero” page with the 3 boxes. Have groups use the page to gather information about their hero. After gathering information, the groups will create a poster to use for the class timeline. Students can use the page Timeline Template to create their poster.

Gather together and allow each group to share their poster. Create a giant timeline on the wall using their posters.

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What is a Hero?

A hero is ____________________________
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__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
A hero is ____________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
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__________________________________________________________________________
A hero is ____________________________
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A hero is ____________________________
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__________________________________________________________________________
What is a HERO?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Heroic Trait Connections</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>DEDICATION</strong></td>
<td>Doing something important even when you are afraid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being devoted to a goal or purpose</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>COURAGE</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SELFLESSNESS</strong></td>
<td>Not giving up when things become difficult</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concern for others before oneself</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PERSEVERANCE</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>BRAVERY</strong></td>
<td>Showing concern for the sufferings or misfortunes of others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ready to face danger or pain to accomplish a goal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>COMPASSION</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>WISDOM</strong></td>
<td>Willingness to give or share what you have (time, money, help, food, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having experience, knowledge or good judgement to help you do what is right</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GENEROSITY</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>©K Dupre, 2013</td>
<td><a href="http://www.teachertrap.com">www.teachertrap.com</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Hero:

- Facts
- Heroic Deeds
- Beliefs
**Hero: Ruby Bridges**

**Facts**
- Born September 8, 1954 in Mississippi; moved to New Orleans, LA when she was 4.
- When she was 6 years old, her parents volunteered to allow her to be one of the first black children to attend an all-white school in the South.
- Many people were angry when she went to school; crowds yelled at her and parents took their children out of school.

**Heroic Deeds**
- Went to school every day even though angry crowds yelled at her as she walked in.
- Stayed calm and positive even though others around her did not.
- Her family and many others believed that it was important for black children to have the same educational opportunities as white children and Ruby helped to make that possible.

**Beliefs**
- Ruby and her family believed that black children and white children should get the same educational opportunities.
- Ruby and her family believed that black children were just as smart as white children.
- Ruby cared about others, even those who were angry and did not want her to go to the school.
On this day, ________________ showed

__________________________

and

__________________________

by

__________________________

__________________________

__________________________

__________________________

__________________________

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hero</th>
<th>Overview</th>
<th>Resources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Helen Keller | Born deaf and blind, Keller learned to communicate and read with the help of a special teacher named Annie. Keller even went to college. She inspired and helped others who were deaf and blind. | * many books available  
Interactive Biography: http://braillebug.afb.org/hkmuseum.asp  
| Clara Barton | During the Civil War, Barton traveled to different battlefields to help care for wounded soldiers. She learned of the International Red Cross and founded the American Red Cross which helps people recover from all kinds of disasters. | Simple Biography: http://www.ducksters.com/biography/women_leaders/clara_barton.php  
* Time for Kids: Clara Barton, Angel of the Battlefield (Awesome Biography!) |
| Juliette Gordon Low | Low is the founder of the Girl Scouts. She encouraged girls from all backgrounds, including those with disabilities, to join and get outdoors! She helped girls build self-reliance and resourcefulness. She empowered young girls to dream big and go after their dreams. | Biography and Interactive Timeline: http://www.girlscouts.org/who_we_are/history/low_biology/  
* Juliette Low (Paperback) by Susan Bivin Aller |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hero</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>James A. Lovell</strong></td>
<td>James “Jim” Lovell was the commander of the Apollo 13 mission to the moon. When the spacecraft was damaged he and the two others aboard struggled to survive. In the end, they returned to Earth safely.</td>
<td>* fact sheet included Online Resource: (not kid-friendly) <a href="http://www.space.com/20320-astronaut-jim-lovell-apollo-13-biography.html">http://www.space.com/20320-astronaut-jim-lovell-apollo-13-biography.html</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Todd Beamer</strong></td>
<td>On September 11, 2001 Todd Beamer boarded United Airlines Flight 93. The flight was hijacked by terrorists that wanted to crash the plane into a building. Beamer and others on the plane fought the terrorists causing the plane to crash in a field rather than into a populated area.</td>
<td>*fact sheet included Simple Biography: <a href="http://www.unitedheroes.com/Todd-Beamer.html">http://www.unitedheroes.com/Todd-Beamer.html</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ellen Ochoa</strong></td>
<td>Ochoa is celebrated as the first Hispanic American woman to travel to space. Ochoa completed 3 NASA space shuttle missions and spent over 900 hours in space.</td>
<td>* fact sheet included Simple Biography: <a href="http://teacher.scholastic.com/activities/hispanic/ochoa.htm">http://teacher.scholastic.com/activities/hispanic/ochoa.htm</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hero</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Hector P. Garcia | Dr. Garcia was a Mexican-American physician, veteran, and civil rights advocate who spent his life fighting for the civil and educational rights of Mexican Americans. | * fact sheet included  
Interactive Biography [http://www.utmb.edu/drgarcia/](http://www.utmb.edu/drgarcia/) |
| Martin Luther King, Jr. | Dr. King was an activist, humanitarian, and leader in the civil rights movement who promoted “non-violent disobedience” such as “sit-in’s” and boycotts. | Martin’s Big Words: The Life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. (Paperback) by Doreen Rappaport  
| The Four Chaplains | A U.S. Army ship carrying more than 900 men was fired upon by a submarine. As the ship began sinking the four Chaplains aboard handed out life vests and helped others. As the ship sank, the four Chaplains were seen holding arms and praying. | * fact sheet included  
Great Website: [http://www.immortalchaplains.org/Story/story.htm](http://www.immortalchaplains.org/Story/story.htm) |
James A. Lovell

Background
James Lovell was born March 28, 1928 in Cleveland, Ohio. He earned his degree at the United States Naval Academy in 1952 and became a test pilot. In 1962, Lovell was selected as a NASA astronaut and went on his first mission on the Gemini 7. Lovell flew to space 4 times and spent over 700 hours in space.

Apollo 13
In 1970, Lovell was the commander on the Apollo 13 mission to the moon. Before they could land on the moon, an oxygen tank exploded and damaged the spacecraft. The three men were stranded in space for four days. They were cold, uncomfortable, and unsure if they would ever return home. Through teamwork and perseverance they arrived safely back on Earth on April 17, 1970.
Todd Beamer was born on November 24, 1968. He was a husband and father living with his family in New Jersey.

On September 11, 2001 he boarded United Airlines Flight 93. Terrorists hijacked the flight intending to crash the plane into a building. Beamer and others aboard fought the terrorists and tried to gain control of the plane. The plane still crashed, killing all aboard, but because of their brave efforts the plane crashed in a field rather than in an area full of people.
Ellen Ochoa

Background
Ellen Ochoa was born on May 10, 1958 in California. She studied science and engineering at San Diego State University and Stanford University. Ochoa was an inventor and developed three patents for optical engineering systems and is considered to be a pioneer of spacecraft technology.

First Hispanic American Woman in Space
In 1990, Ochoa was selected to be an astronaut by NASA. In 1993, she took her first mission into space aboard the shuttle Discovery. She spent over 900 hours in space on different missions and helped develop the International Space Station. She was the first Hispanic American Woman in space.
**Background**

Hector Garcia was born Llera, Mexico in 1914. He grew up in southern Texas in a town called Mercedes. He earned his medical degree at The University of Texas and served in the Army. He opened a medical practice in Corpus Christi, Texas where he offered low cost and sometimes free treatment to those in need.

**Advocate and Activist**

Dr. Garcia was outraged by the unequal care for Mexican Americans. He worked to desegregate hospitals, cemeteries, and even swimming pools in South Texas. He wanted equal rights and fair labor practices for Mexican Americans. His speeches and letters gained national attention. He also worked to help Mexican American veterans gain the services they needed after serving our country.
The Four Chaplains

Background

A U.S. Army ship carrying more than 900 men was hit by a torpedo launched from a submarine. Aboard the ship were four Chaplains - Father John Washington, Reverend Clark Poling, Rabbi Alexander Goode, and Reverend George Fox. The ship began to sink immediately.

The "Immortal" Chaplains

The four Chaplains began handing out life vests and helping the other men aboard. Rather than worry about their own safety, they tried to save other men. As the ship sank, the four Chaplains were seen standing arm-in-arm and praying for the safety of those on the ship. None of the Chaplains survived, but they are remembered as heroes.
Students design a trading card based on the hero they researched. On the front, they sketch the hero, write the name, and write the one trait that hero best represents.

Fact: Ruby Bridges was the first black child to attend an all-white school in the South.

My Opinion: Ruby showed a lot of courage when she returned to school each day, even though people were angry and mean to her.

On the back, they write a fact and an opinion about the person.

*Run copies of finished work so that each student has their own set!
Part 2: My Heroes and Me

Lesson 1: My Personal Hero

Ask students to think about the people in their lives. Who is a hero to you? Why? Refer back to the traits of a hero and ask students to think about people they know who show these traits. They might choose a family member, a teacher, a coach, a friend, etc.

Students will gather information about their hero on the “My Hero” page with the 3 boxes. They will list Facts (name, age, relationship to student, etc.), Heroic Traits & Deeds (the traits and examples), and “My Opinion” (what they think about this person and why). For a writing connection, you can have them create a written composition to support their poster as well. They will use this information to create a poster about their hero to share with the class. (Don’t forget to revise their definition of a hero again!)

Lesson 2: First Responders are Heroes

Students will think about the different first responders in the local community and write a letter to one group thanking them for their heroic deeds and service. Begin by creating an anchor chart of first responders like the example that follows. Reflect on the importance of first responders and their heroic traits. Students can use the letter template to write and then share their letter with a partner or small group. If possible, mail the letters! :)

Lesson 3: Me as a Hero

Ask students to think about what they have done or can do to be a hero for someone else. They might want to go back to the “Traits of Hero” page and look at their personal connections. Students will create a poster that includes for examples of ways they can be hero for others. (This is a great connection to bullying!)

EXTENSIONS & EXTRAS:

*Hero Poem - students create an acrostic poem about what it means to be a hero

*Hero Foldable (run front to back) - students can use the foldable to gather information about a hero

* Venn Diagram - students compare two heroes and write about similarities and differences

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My Hero:

- Facts
- Heroic Traits & Deeds
- My Opinion
My Hero:

Facts

___________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________

Heroic Traits & Deeds

___________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________

My Opinion

___________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________
Police Department

* Police officers help those who are victims of crime and enforce laws to protect the people

Fire Department

* Firefighters and volunteer firefighters provide rescue services and extinguish fires

First Responders

* Paramedics and EMT's (Emergency Medical Technicians) provide on-site emergency medical services

* Provide protection, help and medical services after natural disasters or in the case of national disasters

Emergency Medical Services

Military First Responders
Date: ____________

Dear ________________,

Thank you for your service. You are a hero because you show ________________ when you ________________ ________________.

You also show ________________ when you ________________ ________________.

I feel safer because I know that you will ________________ ________________.

If I could I would give you ________________ ________________!

Thank you,

______________________
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FACTS</th>
<th>HEROIC DEEDS</th>
<th>TRAITS</th>
<th>BELIEFS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>When and where was your hero born?</td>
<td>What heroic deeds did your hero do?</td>
<td>What heroic traits did your hero show?</td>
<td>What did your hero believe?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What do you know about your hero’s early life?</td>
<td>What did your hero do?</td>
<td>Why did your hero do what he or she did?</td>
<td>Why did your hero do what he or she did?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
MY HERO: ______________________________
Comparing Heroes

Our heroes are __________________ and ___________________.

Our heroes are similar because they both _________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________.

Another similarity is that they both ____________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________.

Our heroes are different because ____________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________.

Another difference is that ________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________.
Thank You!

I hope this product is just what you needed!

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Or my blog here: www.teachertrap.com

And thanks to the following brilliant, creative people for their clipart, fonts, borders, and backgrounds!

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  - thewizardofboz.blogspot.com
- Melonheadz Illustrations
  - melonheadzillustrating.blogspot.com
- KG Fonts
  - www.kimberlygeswein.com
- Ink n' Little Things
  - inknlittlethings.blogspot.com
- Doodles by Karen Myers
  - www.kpmdoodles.com
- Sugarhill Co.
  - www.sugarhillco.com
- I Am a Fan of DBS DigiScraps
  - dbsdigscreaps.blogspot.com
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  - cc teachfirst.blogspot.com

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